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WHAT A LITTLE

Child Should Know;

OR,

SIMPLE LESSONS ON THE CREED, LORD'S PRAYER TEN COMMANDMENTS, ETC.

DESIGNED FOR THE USE OF

PARENTS, SPONSORS, AND TEACHERS.

BY
JENNY MARSH PARKER.

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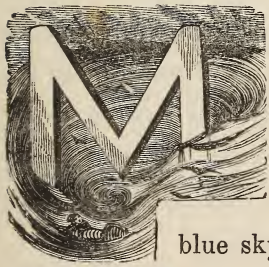
WHAT A LITTLE CHILD SHOULD KNOW.

CHAPTER I.

HOW GOD HAS BLESSED YOU.



Y dear child, did you ever look at this beautiful earth —the wide, blooming meadows; the blue sky; the pretty flowers—and let your heart overflow with love and joy, because *you know* who is the good Maker of them all? Were you ever thank-

ful for *knowing* who makes the birds to sing, the fruit to ripen, the violets and roses to look and smell so sweetly? And did you ever think how very sad it would be, if you were playing with your little brother, in the garden, some day—some bright June morning, when the bees, and birds, and roses all seemed as happy as you—and that little brother should ask you *who* made the sun, the grass, and the singing birds, and you should have to say, in reply, "I do not know; *no one has ever told me!*"—would not that be a very sad thing for a child to say? If any one should ask you that same question, could you give a better answer?

Or, suppose you should wander into a graveyard, with that little brother, where the old and young, the rich and the poor,

were resting together, and you should sit down upon a grave — may be the grave of one you love better than all the living people in the world—and, with a wondering voice, that little brother should ask, "Where have all the dead people gone? What will become of us after we die? What will happen to us?" — and you should have to say, in reply, "I do not know; *no one has ever told me!*" — can you think how sad that would be?

Or, if you should get very angry with that little brother, some day, and should strike him, throw him on the ground, and say words that anger brought, and some one should lay a hand upon your shoulder, and say, "Do you not know that you are sinning, that you are taking God's name in vain, and, if you do like

this, he will not love you?"—and you should have to say, "I know nothing about God, or why I should not be angry, and say what I please?"—think, dear child, would not that be very sad?

Yet there are, in this wide world, very many little children that do not know of God, or his blessed Son, Jesus; and, even in our land, yes, in our city, those that never heard or spoke the holy name, but as an oath. They were not born of Christian parents, who early gave them to the Lord, and led their young feet to the house of God; but their parents were lost in sin; and alas for the little ones born to such a lot! Do you feel very bad for them, and believe that they, having never known God, must be very wicked indeed? Stop, a moment, my child. Can you not think

of those that are greater sinners, by far, in the sight of heaven?

Does a little boy that knows not God, and so does not pray to him, sin as deeply as the one that has been baptized in his name, and taught his holy word, who but seldom says his prayers, and, then, in a thoughtless hurry? If you know God, and sin against him, who, in his sight, is the greater sinner, the little heathen, or you?

I fear you do not think enough about these great things. If many beautiful presents fell into your hands, and you did not know the giver, could you be blamed for not offering him thanks? But, if you did know who he was, and should then refuse to go to him in gratitude, would you not be very unworthy of such kindness?

God, in his loving mercy, has blessed you. You were not born in a land where God is unknown, and where you would have grown up in ignorance of him; nor were your parents so lost in guilt and sin, that every thing pure and holy was shut out of your heart, and you brought up for the prison and gallows. A Christian father and mother were yours: and, while you were a little babe, they carried you to church to be baptized and consecrated to the service of the Lord Jesus; and you, sweet infant that you were, were "received into Christ's flock, and signed with the sign of the Cross, in token that you should not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified, but manfully to fight, under his banner, against sin, the world, and the devil, and to continue Christ's

faithful soldier and servant, unto your life's end."

Thus were you placed within the sacred fold — the kingdom of Christ on earth—and made a lamb of that good Shepherd, who has said, "Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily, I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God, as a little child, he shall not enter therein."

Have you wandered away from that good Shepherd? Have you left the sweet pasture, which He gives his dutiful children, and gone out as a sinner into the world, caring not for him or his people, but filling your heart with naughtiness and guilt? Are the sacred vows your sponsors made for you at your baptism lightly forgotten—

vows that you must fulfill; and the God of heaven is your Judge? Aye, they were written in characters of light, and will appear to you at the last great day; and blessed are you, if, then, you can say, "Lord, I have, at least, sought to keep them all," and can hear him answer, "Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

And, in this little book, I would place before you the holy vows your sponsors made, hoping you will think seriously of them, and pray God to help you fulfill them. And, as they also promised to have you instructed in the *Creed*, the *Lord's Prayer*, and the *Ten Commandments*, and other parts of the *Church Catechism*, I will present to you those articles of the Christian faith and duty, trusting, if you

have not already committed them to memory and heart, you will soon do so.

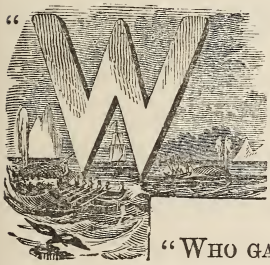
"Grant, gracious Lord, that these thy children may walk in the truth, and be burning, shining lights, in this world of darkness and sin."

My dear child, when you read these articles, let it be in a slow and thoughtful manner. Pause and think, at the end of each sentence, so that you may rightly understand them; and may the Holy Spirit impress them upon your heart.

CHAPTER II.

A CATECHISM.

THAT IS TO SAY, AN INSTRUCTION TO BE LEARNED BY EVERY PERSON, BEFORE HE BE BROUGHT TO BE CONFIRMED BY THE BISHOP.



"HAT IS YOUR NAME?

"N. or M. [You will here reply by giving your Christian name.]

"WHO GAVE YOU THIS NAME?

"My sponsors, in baptism; wherein I was made a member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven."

Let us stop here, a moment, before

going further. Did you think what you were saying, when you just said that you had been made a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven? Have you, thus far, in your short life, proved yourself worthy to claim that blessed inheritance? Do you always behave like a child of God, or would people little think, by your conduct, that you have put on Christ? "Ye are all the children of God, by faith in Christ Jesus; for as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." Have you ever cast him aside for Satan and the world?

"WHAT DID YOUR SPONSORS THEN FOR YOU?

"They did promise and vow three things,

in my name: first, that I should renounce the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanity of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh; secondly, that I should believe all the articles of the Christian faith; and, thirdly, that I should keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of my life."

Let me give you a few of the many sacred texts that led them to make these holy vows for you. Jesus said, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." And again we are told,

"Christ gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from the present evil world." "Hereby, we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby, know we that we are in him. He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked." And remember, dear children, that "we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast *unto the end*."

"DOST THOU NOT THINK THAT THOU ART BOUND TO BELIEVE, AND TO DO, AS THEY HAVE PROMISED FOR THEE?"

Do not make this answer lightly; it will fall from your lips either as a falsehood or a truth.

"Yes, verily; and, by God's help, so I will. And I heartily thank our heavenly Father, that he hath called me to this state of salvation, through Jesus Christ, our Saviour. And I pray unto God to give me his grace, that I may continue in the same, unto my life's end."

You said, "And I pray unto God, to give me his grace," etc.; have you ever prayed to him for it? Jesus said, "Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it to you."

The Apostles' Creed. "I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary; suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God, the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come, to judge the quick and the dead.

"I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen."

My dear children, I hope you will

never repeat this creed as some persons do upon every Lord's day. They have learned it *by* heart, but have it not *in* the heart, and so they repeat it over, just as they would the multiplication table, but not with as little harm; for they sin deeply before God, when they stand up boldly in his house, and say they believe in him as the Father Almighty, and in Jesus Christ their Lord and Saviour, who died for them, when their thoughts are wandering upon earthly things, all the time. It is a very solemn thing, to say that you believe the Apostles' Creed; and, when you repeat it, my dear children, think of what you are saying, and that God knows whether you believe in him or not; and can you stand up and lie to God?

"WHAT DOST THOU CHIEFLY LEARN IN THESE ARTICLES OF THY BELIEF?

"*First*, I learn to believe in God the Father, who hath made me and all the world.

"*Secondly*, In God the Son, who hath redeemed me and all mankind.

"*Thirdly*, In God the Holy Ghost, who sanctifieth me and all the people of God."

Now, would you have the Bible evidences of the truth of this creed, upon which our Church places the utmost importance? I wish you would commit them to memory, so that, if any one should ask you, "My child, why do you believe in God, in Jesus Christ, or the forgiveness of sins?" you could answer with a Bible text that justifies you.

You must be able to give a reason of your hope, or some people will say you believe that which you have no good reason for believing. I will give you the several articles of the creed, and, below them, the Bible evidence.

"*I believe in God.*"

"Believe in the Lord, your God, so shall ye be established." 2 *Chron.* xx. 20.

"Without faith, it is impossible to please him; for he that cometh to God, must believe that he is." *Heb.* xi. 6.

"Unto thee it was showed, that thou mightest know that the Lord he is God; there is none else beside him." *Deut.* iv. 35.

"*The Father Almighty.*"

"Have we not all one Father? hath not one God created us?" *Mal.* ii. 10.

"*Maker of heaven and earth.*"

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." *Gen.* i. 1.

"*And in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.*"

"Thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins." *Matt.* i. 21.

"God sent his only begotten Son into the world." 1 *John* iv. 9.

"*Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary.*"

"Fear not to take unto thee Mary, thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost." *Matt.* i. 20.

"*Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried.*"

"The chief priests and elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him

to death; and, when they had bound him, they led him away, and delivered him to Pontius Pilate, the governor. When he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified; and they stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe; and, when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand; and they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head; and, after that they had mocked him, they led him away to crucify him. Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost; and, when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and laid it in his own new tomb." *Matt.* xxvii. 1, 2, 26, to 31, 50, 59, 60.

"*He descended into hell; the third day he rose from the dead.*"

"Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." *Psalm* xvi. 10.

"What is it, but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?" *Eph.* iv. 9.

"He rose again, the third day, according to the scriptures." 1 *Cor.* xv. 4.

"*He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God, the Father Almighty.*"

"After the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God." *Mark* xvi. 19.

"*From thence, he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.*"

"It is he which was ordained of God to be the judge of quick and dead." *Acts* x.

42. (The word *quick* here means those that are alive.)

"The Lord Jesus Christ who shall judge the quick and the dead, at his appearing and his kingdom." 2 *Tim.* iv. 1

"*I believe in the Holy Ghost.*"

"Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost? Thou hast not lied unto men but unto God." *Acts* v. 3, 4.

"He that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost, hath never forgiveness; but is in danger of eternal damnation." *Mark* iii. 29.

"*The Holy Catholic Church.*"

"Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God, by thy blood, out of every kindred and tongue, and people, and nation." *Rev.* v. 9.

"That he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." *Eph.* v. 27.

"*The Communion of saints.*"

"That which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us; and, truly, our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son, Jesus Christ. If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another." 1 *John* i. 3, 7.

"*The forgiveness of sins.*"

"There is forgiveness with thee, (God) that thou mayest be feared." *Psalm* cxxx. 4.

"Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; blessed

is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin." *Rom.* iv. 7, 8.

"*The resurrection of the body.*"

"Thy dead men shall live: together with my dead body shall they arise." *Isa.* xxvi. 19.

"The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth—they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life." *John* v. 28, 29.

"*And the life everlasting. Amen.*"

"He gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." *John* iii. 16.

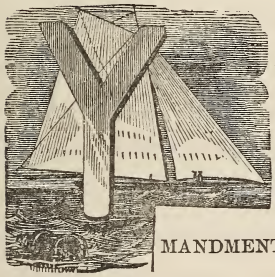
"His servants shall serve him; and they shall reign for ever and ever." *Rev.* xxii. 3, 5.

"These shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal." *Matt.* xxv. 46.

Thus you see, my dear children, that the creed is firmly built upon the Bible. I have not given you a tenth part of the texts that can be brought forward to support each article, but enough to give you a reason for your belief in it. Will you not learn these passages, and thus strengthen your heart in "the faith once delivered to the saints?"

CHAPTER III.

THE COMMANDMENTS, AND LORD'S PRAYER.



YOU SAID THAT YOUR SPONSORS DID PROMISE FOR YOU, THAT YOU SHOULD KEEP GOD'S COMMANDMENTS: TELL ME HOW MANY THERE ARE.

"Ten.

"WHICH ARE THEY?

"The same which God spake in the twentieth chapter of *Exodus*, saying, I am

the Lord thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

"I. Thou shalt have none other gods but me.

"II. Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image, nor the likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down to them, nor worship them; for I, the Lord thy God, am a jealous God, and visit the sins of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and show mercy unto thousands, in them that love me, and keep my commandments.

"III. Thou shall not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will

not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

"IV. Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath-day. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all that thou hast to do; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God. In it thou shalt do no manner of work, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, thy man servant, and thy maid servant, thy cattle, and the stranger that is within thy gates; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore, the Lord blessed the seventh day, and hallowed it.

"V. Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

"VI. Thou shalt do no murder.

"VII. Thou shalt not commit adultery.

"VIII. Thou shalt not steal.

"IX. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

"X. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his servant, nor his maid, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is his.

"WHAT DOST THOU CHIEFLY LEARN BY THESE COMMANDMENTS?

"I learn two things, my duty towards God, and my duty towards my neighbor.

"WHAT IS THY DUTY TOWARDS GOD?

"My duty towards God is, to believe in him; to fear him; and to love him with all my heart, with all my mind, with all my soul, and with all my strength; to worship him; to give him thanks; to put

my whole trust in him; to call upon him; to honor his holy name and his word; and to serve him truly all the days of my life.

"WHAT IS THY DUTY TOWARDS THY NEIGHBOR?

"My duty towards my neighbor is, to love him as myself, and to do unto all men as I would they should do unto me; to love, honor, and succor my father and mother; to honor and obey the civil authority; to submit myself to all my governors, teachers, spiritual pastors, and masters; to order myself lowly and reverently to all my betters; to hurt nobody by word or deed; to be true and just in all my dealings; to bear no malice nor hatred in my heart; to keep my hands from picking and stealing, and my tongue

from evil speaking, lying and slandering; to keep my body in temperance, soberness, and chastity; not to covet nor desire other men's goods, but to learn and labor truly to get mine own living, and to do my duty in that state of life unto which it shall please God to call me.

"MY GOOD CHILD, KNOW THIS—THAT THOU ART NOT ABLE TO DO THESE THINGS OF THYSELF, NOR TO WALK IN THE COMMANDMENTS OF GOD, AND TO SERVE HIM, WITHOUT HIS SPECIAL GRACE, WHICH THOU MUST LEARN, AT ALL TIMES, TO CALL FOR BY DILIGENT PRAYER: LET ME HEAR, THEREFORE, IF THOU CANST SAY THE LORD'S PRAYER.

"Our Father who art in Heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth, as it is in

heaven; give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. *Amen.*"

My dear child, have you repeated this prayer of our blessed Saviour so often, without thinking of what you were saying—what you were asking God for—that you do not know how full of love and beauty it is? Have your lips said it, but your heart been dumb? That is the way too many say their prayers; and is it not lying to God, to kneel before him, and profess our adoration and love, when our minds are on something else, all the time? Oh! were it not better never to pray, than to be a hypocrite to Him that looketh into

the hearts of men, and understandeth all their thoughts?

Do you know what it means to pray, "forgive us our *trespasses*, as we forgive those that *trespass* against us?" I have known little children that had said the Lord's Prayer ever since they were old enough to repeat it after their mother; yet, when they were asked what *trespass* meant, could not tell; and so they did not understand one of the most blessed petitions that was ever made. To *trespass* means, to *transgress*—to offend, to commit wrong, or sin, against another. You ask your heavenly Father to forgive your sins against him and his laws, even as you forgive those persons that sin against you, or do you wrong. So, if you pray, "forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those that

trespass against us," when you have any hatred or malice toward those that have done you ill, how will God forgive your many great sins against him? "If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but, if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."

"WHAT DESIREST THOU OF GOD IN THIS PRAYER? (Lord's Prayer.)

"I desire my Lord God, our heavenly Father, who is the giver of all goodness, to send his grace unto me and to all people; that we may worship him, serve him, and obey him, as we ought to do: and I pray unto God, that he will send us all things that are needful, both for our souls and bodies; and that he will

be merciful unto us, and forgive us our sins; and that it will please him to save and defend us in all dangers, both of soul and body; and that he will keep us from all sin and wickedness, and from our spiritual enemy, and from everlasting death; and this I trust he will do, of his mercy and goodness, through our Lord Jesus Christ; and, therefore, I say, Amen: so be it."

CHAPTER IV.

THE SACRAMENTS.

HOW MANY SACRAMENTS HATH CHRIST ORDAINED IN HIS CHURCH?

"Two only, as generally necessary to salvation; that is to say, Baptism, and the Supper of the Lord.

"WHAT MEANEST THOU BY THIS WORD SACRAMENT?"

"I mean an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace given

unto us, ordained by Christ himself, as a means whereby we receive the same, and a pledge to assure us thereof.

"How many parts are there in a Sacrament?

"Two; the outward visible *sign*, and the inward spiritual grace.

"What is the outward visible sign, or form, in Baptism?

"Water; wherein the person is baptized, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

"What is the inward and spiritual grace?

"A death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness; for, being by nature born in sin, and the children of wrath, we are hereby made the children of grace.

"WHAT IS REQUIRED OF PERSONS TO BE BAPTIZED?

"Repentance, whereby they forsake sin; and faith, whereby they steadfastly believe the promises of God made to them in that sacrament.

"WHY, THEN, ARE INFANTS BAPTIZED, WHEN, BY REASON OF THEIR TENDER AGE, THEY CAN NOT PERFORM THEM?

"Because they promise them both by their sureties: which promise, when they come to age, themselves are bound to perform.

"WHY WAS THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER ORDAINED?

"For the continual remembrance of the sacrifice of the death of Christ, and of the benefits which we receive thereby.

"WHAT IS THE OUTWARD PART, OR SIGN, OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

"Bread and wine, which the Lord hath commanded to be received.

"WHAT IS THE INWARD PART, OR THING SIGNIFIED?

"The body and blood of Christ, which are spiritually taken and received, by the faithful, in the Lord's Supper.

"WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS WHEREOF WE ARE PARTAKERS THEREBY?

"The strengthening and refreshing of our souls by the body and blood of Christ, as our bodies are by the bread and wine.

"WHAT IS REQUIRED OF THOSE WHO COME TO THE LORD'S SUPPER?

"To examine themselves, whether they repent them truly of their former sins; steadfastly purposing to lead a new life,

have a lively faith in God's mercy, through Christ, with a thankful remembrance of his death, and be in charity with all men."

If you are quite young, you may not perfectly understand these questions and their answers; but you must commit them to memory, as well as you can; and, as you grow older, they will be plainer to you. It is highly important that you, who have been baptized, and thus made members of the congregation of Christ, should know the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the other parts of the catechism, as you will thus be made acquainted with the chief principles of the Christian faith — the faith of His Church, to which

you belong. If you attend Sunday-school — and I trust you do — you will have the catechism, here given you, made more simple; and your teacher or pastor will often question you upon it, and explain it to you.

It is very important, my dear children, that you should believe in God, and the holy truths of his gospel, and know *why* you believe; that you should have a firm faith in the truth Jesus Christ established upon earth, and know *why* you cherish that faith; and that you, young as you are, should be able to tell just what your belief, or creed, is. Now, if some wicked person that did not believe in God or the Bible should ask you, "Why do you have faith that there is a God Almighty?" what answer would you

make. Would you not tell him, "Because, when I look around upon this beautiful earth, full of its fruits, and living things — up to the great starry heavens, or at my own little body, so "fearfully and wonderfully made," I know that there is a wise and loving power, who has made all of these things, keeps them in order, and is constantly creating new. I know that man could never make the grass to grow; the flowers to bloom; the sun to rise and set; my heart to beat, or my blood to flow through my veins — I know that some one greater and wiser than man does all these things; and I love him, and adore him: and *He* is *God.*"

And, should that person further ask, "*Why* do you believe in the Christian faith, and cherish the Church you say

Christ founded upon earth?"—this is the answer every good Sunday-school scholar would make: "Because I believe in Jesus Christ, who came into the world, to teach us the will of God, and the conditions of salvation. His miracles, and perfect life, and heavenly doctrines, showed that he was sent from God. I know the Christian faith is the same he taught to his followers. I know it makes men kind and peaceful, pure of heart, and temperate, and just, and merciful, and holy, as he is. It gives us strength to overcome the sins of this world, to bear our trials and sorrows, and to make ourselves fit for heaven. And I cherish the Church, because it cherishes the Christian faith, and, by keeping within its fold, I may receive needful grace, and

become a more perfect follower of Jesus." And, if you are asked *what* you believe, how plainly and perfectly you can tell, if you know and understand the creed. I say *understand*, for you must understand, before you can clearly believe. If you have always been a careless child, and never paid any attention to what the creed contains, but merely repeated it over and over without thought, are you prepared to say you believe it?

When you are older, and go out into the world, to think and act for yourself, you will find very many who do not believe in the Bible, or have faith in our Blessed Saviour; and you will even discover, among those who profess to be followers of Jesus, unbelievers in many of the great truths he taught. And these

persons will strive to overthrow your faith, and to fill your mind with their doubts and errors. By and by, in years to come, if you read a great deal, as I suppose you will, you will see that many books have been written against the Christian faith, and have led many to disbelieve it. I tremble for you, my dear little children, when thinking of all your faith must meet, and the wreck it will surely have, unless it is firmly built. Many a child, like you, born, and baptized in the Church, brought up in the Sunday-school, and given every opportunity for forming a good character, has gone out into the world, as you must soon go, and, instead of defending the faith, and trusting in God, has listened to unbelievers, and been overwhelmed at last by doubt and

error, and died without faith in God or Christ Jesus. Shall it be so with *you?* Will *you* ever turn against Christ, your Saviour, that you now profess to love and worship, or be ashamed to confess him before men, saying, like faithless Peter, "I know him not!" God keep you within the fold, dear little ones, and you yourselves "unspotted from the world."

You have heard the parable that Jesus gave to his disciples, in his sermon upon the Mount, of the wise and the foolish man, and the houses they built. Let me repeat it to you again, as it is in the gospel according to St. Matthew:

"Therefore, whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock;

"And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.

"And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand;

"And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it."

Now, my child, are you building your faith upon a rock, like the wise man — that is, are you firm in your belief of the principles of the Christian faith, so firm that the rain of trouble, the winds and floods of error, may beat upon it, and it shall not be overthrown? Are you now,

in your childhood, while at the Sunday-school, laying the foundation of your faith, and building upon a rock, by practising what you know to be your duty to God and your neighbor, or, like the foolish man, are you building upon the sand, by your heedlessness of God's commands? Let me tell you what you are doing, if you are like the latter. You learn your Creed, the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and other Sunday-school lessons, so that you can repeat them to your teacher; but you never stop to think what you are saying when they fall from your lips; and so little do you understand them, or care to, that you repeat a falsehood, whenever you say "*I believe*," in the creed. When you kneel down to pray, you do not think of God or

Jesus Christ, but repeat the prayer as fast as you can, and then rise up, no better than you were before. You go to church, but laugh and whisper while there, or, instead of joining in the prayers, and hearing the sermon, your thoughts are busy about something else. What is such a faith — if it is worthy of the name — most like?

"Unto the foolish man which built his house upon the sand;

"And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; *and it fell: and great was the fall of it.*"

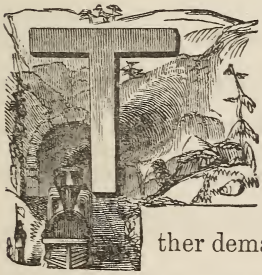
But, if you are doing just contrary to all that — if you pray with faith and earnestness, if you try to understand and obey the truths of the gospel, and to show

forth that desire in every act of your life—you are building upon the rock, and are, moreover, keeping the solemn vow your sponsors made for you at your baptism, by renouncing the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh; you are *believing* the articles of the Christian faith, and keeping God's holy will and commandments, and striving to walk in the same; and God grant, in his loving mercy, that, when the rains, and winds, and floods, shall beat upon your house, it shall prove as firm as the rock on which it is built.

You will soon reach the age when it will be your duty to renew the solemn promise and vow that you made, or that was made in your name, at your baptism,

and to confirm — that is, to *make firm*, or to establish — the same. In the sacred rite of confirmation, you will fulfill a vow to God — a vow that *you* alone can fulfill; and, if you perform it with sincerity and faith, the blessings of heaven will be upon you, and Jesus will count you as one of his fold on earth. At your baptism, your sponsors promised for you; but, at your confirmation, your own heart must make the solemn vows.

DIRECTIONS FOR PRAYER.



O assist the dear children that read this little book, to live the holy lives their heavenly Father demands of them, I have selected the following short directions for prayer, which I hope they will put into daily practice. In Bishop Lee's *Prayers for Children*, a little book they all should have, may be found appropriate petitions for the beginning of each day.

"MORNING.

"As soon as you awake in the morning, try to give your first thoughts to God. Think of his goodness, in keeping you from the dangers of the night past, and in giving you another day.

"After you have put on your clothes, kneel down, and offer up your morning prayers, remembering that God sees you.

"Before you begin the duties of the day, read some portion of your Bible.

"EVENING.

"BEFORE you say your evening prayers, call yourself to an account for the way in which you have spent the day; how you have said your prayers, and done all your duties. Recollect what blessings you

have received from God, and what faults you have been guilty of against God and your neighbor. Ask God to show you your sins, and to give you true repentance for what you have done amiss.

"*Ask yourself these questions very seriously*, remembering that God sees you, and that you can not deceive him. Ask,

"Did I lie in bed longer than I ought to have done, this morning?

"Did I say my prayers very seriously and devoutly, as soon as I got up? or did I get up so late as to hurry them over?

"Do I love and obey my parents, as I ought? or have I been rude, naughty, or sulky?

"Do I obey and respect my teachers? and have I tried to be good, and learn my lessons, and do my duty?

"Have I thanked God for his goodness to me?

"Have I been greedy or selfish?

"Have I told tales of any one?

"Have I said what was not true? or have I been sly or deceitful?

"Have I taken what did not belong to me?

"Have I injured any person's things?

"Have I been cross and unkind to my playfellows, or brothers, or sisters?

"Have I been cruel to insects or animals?

"When your conscience accuses you of any of these sins, say, O heavenly Father, forgive me this sin, for Jesus Christ's sake.

"Then, kneeling down, as in the morning, say your evening prayers; and try to

compose yourself to rest, and to give your last thoughts to your crucified Saviour.

"DIRECTIONS FOR READING HOLY SCRIPTURE.

"When you have said your morning prayer, you may then go cheerfully to your work, and rely upon the divine goodness for a blessing.

"But, first, if you have time, I advise you to read some short psalm, or piece of a chapter out of the gospels, or historical books; because they are most easy to be understood; remembering the example of young Timothy, who was bred up to know the Scriptures from a child.

"But, if you have not time, on ordinary days, to read the Scripture, be sure to read somewhat of it on Sundays, and holy

days, and at night, when you are just going to bed, that you may close the day with holy thoughts; and, if you hearken diligently to it, when it is read, you do, in effect, read it yourself.

"Now, to make your reading the more profitable to you, begin with one or more of these short prayers.

"PRAYERS BEFORE READING HOLY SCRIPTURE.

"WHEREWITHAL, Lord, shall a young man cleanse his way? even by ruling himself after thy word.

"Lord, open mine eyes, that I may see the wonderful things of thy law.

"O heavenly Father, I humbly beg thy Holy Spirit so to help me, at this time, to read, and understand, and to remember,

and practice thy word, that it may make me wise unto salvation.

"When you are thus prepared, then begin to read; and consider that it is God's most holy word you read, and that, *all the while you are reading, God is speaking to you;* and, therefore, read with attention and humility, and endeavor, as much as you can, to suit your affections to the subject you read.

"For instance, if you read of any of God's commands, they should excite in you a zeal to keep them.

"If you read any of God's threatenings against sinners, or his judgments on them, they should excite in you a fear to provoke him.

"When you read any of his gracious

promises, they should encourage and quicken your obedience.

"When you read any of God's mercies, they should excite you to thanksgiving.

"And, to this purpose, in the midst of your reading, say,

"Lord, give me grace to obey this command;— or,

"Lord, deliver me from this sin, or this judgment;— or,

"Lord, I trust in this good promise;—or,

"Glory be to thee, O Lord, for this mercy;— or,

"Lord, I believe and adore this mystery. Say one of these, according as best agrees with the subject you read; and, when you have read as much as you can conveniently, conclude with one of these short prayers:

"PRAYERS AFTER READING.

"BLESSED be thou, O Lord; O teach me thy statutes.

"Lord, make thy word a lantern unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

"Lord, make thy word my delight and my counselor.

"COLLECTS.

"THE collects in the prayer-book will often help you to pray for the very things you want. Thus:

"*If you wish to pray to be freed from sin, you may use any or all of these:*

"First Sunday in Advent; first Sunday after Easter; St. Andrew; St. James; St. Matthew.

"*If for contrition, or sorrow for sin:*

"Ash Wednesday.

"*If for pardon of sin, and acceptance with God, any of these:*

"Twelfth, twenty-first, twenty-fourth Sundays after Trinity; Purification; and Sunday after Epiphany.

"*If for grace to do good, the following will suit you:*

"Fifth Sunday after Easter; fifth, ninth, eleventh, thirteenth, seventeenth, twenty-fifth Sundays after Trinity.

"*If you have need of prayers to be saved from temptation, you may use these:*

"Fourth Sunday in Advent; fourth Sunday after Epiphany; eighteenth Sunday after Trinity.

"*If you want to pray for God to help you when in sorrow, use*

"Sexagesima; Septuagesima; fourth Sunday in Lent."

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